

CLAIMS

I claim:

- 1 1. A method in a computer system for displaying modeless
2 windows, the computer system running an application, the method comprising:
3 displaying an application window having a client area;
4 within the client area, displaying a document window;
5 displaying a modeless window in the document window and anchored to
6 an edge of the document window; and
7 within the modeless window, displaying information associated with the
8 application.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising updating information
2 displayed in the modeless window to reflect a change in the information associated with
3 the application changes.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the modeless child window has
2 two or more non collinear sides, and wherein portions of a document displayed in the
3 document window are displayed adjacent to at least two of the sides of the modeless
4 window.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the modeless window is wholly
2 contained in the document window.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the modeless window is a child
2 window.

1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the method further includes
2 displaying a second modeless window in the document window and wherein the second
3 modeless window contains information regarding the application.

1 7. The method of claim 6 wherein the modeless window and the
2 second modeless window are non-overlappable.

1 8. The method of claim 1, further comprising changing the size of
2 the modeless window in response to user input.

1 9. The method of claim 8, further comprising receiving the user
2 input via a mouse.

1 10. The method of claim 9, further comprising:
2 expanding the modeless window when the input from the mouse selects
3 a display position that is near the modeless window; and
4 collapsing the modeless window when the input from the mouse selects a
5 display position that is not near the modeless window.

1 11. A computer readable medium whose contents cause a computer
2 system that is running an application to displaying modeless windows by:
3 displaying an application window having a client area;
4 within the client area, displaying a document window;
5 displaying a modeless window in the document window and anchored to
6 an edge of the document window; and
7 within the modeless window, displaying information regarding the
8 application.

1 12. The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to update
3 information displayed in the modeless window as the information regarding the
4 application changes.

1 13. The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the
2 modeless window has two or more non collinear sides, and wherein portions of a
3 document displayed in the document window are displayed adjacent to at least two of
4 the sides of the modeless window.

1 14. The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the
2 modeless window is a child window.

1 15. The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to display a second
3 modeless window in the document window and wherein the second modeless window
4 contains information regarding the application.

1 16. The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to change the size
3 of the modeless window in response to user input.

1 17. The computer readable medium of claim 16 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to receive the user
3 input via a mouse.

1 18. The computer readable medium of claim 17 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to:
3 expanding the modeless window when the input from the mouse is near
4 the modeless window; and
5 collapsing the modeless window when the input from the mouse is not
6 near the modeless window.

1 19. A method in a computer system for displaying modeless
2 windows, the computer system running an application, the method comprising:
3 displaying an application window having a client area;
4 within the client area, displaying a document window;
5 displaying a first modeless window in the document window that within
6 it displays information associated with the application;
7 displaying a second modeless window in the document window that
8 within it displays information associated with the application; and
9 moving a present location of the first modeless window if user input is
10 received that causes the second modeless window to be moved to a position which
11 would overlap a preferred location of the first modeless window.

1 20. The method of claim 19 wherein user input is a double-clicked
2 mouse.

1 21. The method of claim 19 wherein the first modeless window has
2 two or more non collinear sides, and wherein portions of a document displayed in the
3 document window are displayed adjacent to at least two of the sides of the first
4 modeless window.

1 22. The method of claim 19 wherein the first modeless window is
2 wholly contained in the document window.

1 23. The method of claim 19 wherein the first modeless window is
2 anchored to an edge of the document window.

1 24. The method of claim 19 wherein the first modeless window is a
2 child window

1 25. The method of claim 19, further comprising changing the size of
2 the modeless window in response to other user input.

1 26. The method of claim 25, further comprising receiving the other
2 user input via a mouse.

1 27. The method of claim 26, further comprising:
2 expanding the first modeless window when the other input from the
3 mouse selects a display position that is near the modeless window; and
4 collapsing the second modeless window when the other input from the
5 mouse selects a display position that is not near the modeless window.

1 28. A computer readable medium whose contents cause a computer
2 system that is running an application to displaying modeless windows by:
3 displaying an application window having a client area;
4 within the client area, displaying a document window;
5 displaying a first modeless window in the document window that within
6 it displays information associated with the application;
7 displaying a second modeless window in the document window that
8 within it displays information associated with the application; and
9 moving a present location of the first modeless window if user input is
10 received that causes the second modeless window to be moved to a position which
11 would overlap a preferred location of the first modeless window.

1 29. The computer readable medium of claim 28 wherein user input is
2 a double-clicked mouse.

1 30. The computer readable medium of claim 28 wherein the first
2 modeless window has two or more non collinear sides, and wherein portions of a
3 document displayed in the document window are displayed adjacent to at least two of
4 the sides of the first modeless window.

1 31. The computer readable medium of claim 28 wherein the first
2 modeless window is anchored to an edge of the document window.

1 32. The computer readable medium of claim 28 wherein the first
2 modeless window is a child window.

1 33. The computer readable medium of claim 28 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to change the size
3 of the first modeless window in response to other user input.

1 34. The computer readable medium of claim 33 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to receive the
3 other user input via a mouse.

1 35. The computer readable medium of claim 34 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to:
3 expanding the first modeless window when the other input from the
4 mouse is near the modeless window; and
5 collapsing the first modeless window when the other input from the
6 mouse is not near the modeless window.

1 36. A method in a computer system for displaying modeless
2 windows, the computer system running an application, the method comprising:
3 displaying an application window having a client area;
4 within the client area, displaying a document window;
5 displaying a modeless window in the document window that displays
6 information regarding the application; and
7 collapsing the modeless window when user input selects a display
8 position that is not near the modeless window.

1 37. The method of claim 36, further comprising receiving the user
2 input via a mouse.

1 38. The method of claim 36, further comprising updating information
2 displayed in the modeless window to reflect a change in the information associated with
3 the application changes.

1 39. The method of claim 36 wherein the modeless window has two
2 or more non collinear sides, and wherein portions of a document displayed in the
3 document window are displayed adjacent to at least two of the sides of the modeless
4 window.

1 40. The method of claim 36 wherein the modeless window is wholly
2 contained in the document window.

1 41. The method of claim 36 wherein the modeless window is
2 anchored to an edge of the document window.

1 42. The method of claim 36 wherein the method further includes
2 displaying a second modeless window in the document window and wherein the second
3 modeless window contains information regarding the application.

1 43. The method of claim 42 wherein the modeless window and the
2 second modeless window are non-overlappable.

1 44. The method of claim 36, further comprising changing the size of
2 the modeless window in response to user input.

1 45. The method of claim 36, further comprising:
2 expanding the modeless window when the input from the mouse selects
3 a display position that is near the modeless window.

1 46. The method of claim 36 wherein the modeless window is a child
2 window.

1 47. A computer readable medium whose contents cause a computer
2 system that is running an application to displaying modeless windows by:
3 displaying an application window having a client area;
4 within the client area, displaying a document window;
5 displaying a modeless window in the document window that displays
6 information regarding the application; and
7 collapsing the modeless window when user input selects a display
8 position that is not near the modeless window .

1 48. The computer readable medium of claim 47 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to update

3 information displayed in the modeless window as the information regarding the
4 application changes.

1 49. The computer readable medium of claim 47 wherein the
2 modeless window has two or more non collinear sides, and wherein portions of a
3 document displayed in the document window are displayed adjacent to at least two of
4 the sides of the modeless window.

1 50. The computer readable medium of claim 47 wherein the
2 modeless window is anchored to an edge of the document window.

1 51. The computer readable medium of claim 47 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to display a second
3 modeless window in the document window and wherein the second modeless window
4 contains information regarding the application.

1 52. The computer readable medium of claim 47 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to change the size
3 of the modeless window in response to user input.

1 53. The computer readable medium of claim 47 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to receive the user
3 input via a mouse.

1 54. The computer readable medium of claim 53 wherein the contents
2 of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to:
3 expanding the modeless window when the input from the mouse is near
4 the modeless window.

- 1 55. A method of communicating information to a user about a
2 computer program that includes a display window, the method comprising:
3 displaying a first modeless child window that contains information about
4 the computer program to the user, the modeless child window having a preferred
5 location;
6 displaying a second modeless child window that contains information
7 about the computer program to the user, the modeless child window having a preferred
8 location;
9 receiving user input that causes a second modeless child window to be
10 moved to a position in which it would overlap the first modeless child window in its
11 preferred location;
12 in response to determining that the second modeless child window would
13 overlap the first modeless child window, moving the first modeless child window to a
14 new location in which the second modeless child window does not overlap the first
15 modeless child window; and
16 anchoring the first modeless child window in a position that does not
17 interfere with the preferred location of the second modeless child window.

1 56. The method of claim 55, further comprising closing the first
2 modeless child window responsive to other input received from the user, then
3 displaying the first modeless child window responsive to additional input received from
4 the user.

1 57. The method of claim 56, further comprising changing a state of
2 the first modeless child window responsive to additional user input.

1 58. The method of claim 55 wherein both modeless child windows
2 are anchored windows.

1 59. The method of claim 56 wherein the user input is a double-
2 clicked mouse.

1 60. A computer readable medium whose contents cause a computer
2 system running a computer to communicate information to a user about a computer
3 program that includes a display window by:
4 displaying a first modeless child window that contains information about
5 the computer program to the user, the modeless child window having a preferred
6 location;
7 displaying a second modeless child window that contains information
8 about the computer program to the user, the modeless child window having a preferred
9 location;
10 receiving user input that causes a second modeless child window to be
11 moved to a position in which it would overlap the first modeless child window in its
12 preferred location;
13 in response to determining that the second modeless child window would
14 overlap the first modeless child window, moving the first modeless child window to a
15 new location in which the second modeless child window does not overlap the first
16 modeless child window; and
17 anchoring the first modeless child window in a position that does not
18 interfere with the preferred location of the second modeless child window.

1 61. The computer readable medium of claim 59 wherein the contents
2 of the computer readable medium further cause the computer system to update
3 information displayed in the modeless child window as the information regarding the
4 application changes.

1 62. The computer readable medium of claim 59 wherein the contents
2 of the computer readable medium further cause the computer system to close the first

3 modeless child window responsive to other input received from the user and reopen in
4 same position.

1 63. The computer readable medium of claim 59 wherein the contents
2 of the computer readable medium further cause the computer system to detach the
3 modeless child window from the edge of the display window when directed by the user.

1 64. The computer readable medium of claim 59 wherein the user
2 input is a double-clicked mouse.

1 65. The computer readable medium of claim 59 wherein the user
2 input is a mouse drag.

1 66. A computer system for displaying modeless windows to a user of
2 a computer program comprising:

3 a window display system that displays a window having a client area:

4 a second window display system that displays a document window
5 within the client area;

6 a third window display system that displays a modeless child window
7 anchored to the edge of the document window; and

8 a content display system that displays information regarding the
9 application within the modeless child window.

1 67. A computer system for communicating information to a user
2 about a computer program that includes a display window comprising:

3 a window display system that displays a modeless child window
4 containing information about the computer program to the user;

5 a window attacher for anchoring the modeless child window to an edge
6 of the display window;

- 7 an opening process that opens the modeless child window responsive to
- 8 input received from the user; and
- 9 a closing process that closes the modeless child window responsive to
- 10 other input received from the user.